

What is claimed is:

1. A network connection system for connecting a first communication network and a plurality of user terminals when a second communication network is interposed between said first communication network and said plurality of user terminals, said second communication network employing a second protocol different from a first protocol employed in said first communication network, said system comprising:
 - a scheduling apparatus including:
 - 10 an overhead amount correction unit for correcting an overhead amount between data conforming to said second protocol and data conforming to said first protocol to convert received information on a rate based on said second protocol to a rate based on said first protocol; and
 - 15 a scheduler for shaping a transmission rate for the data conforming to said first protocol from said first communication network such that the data conforming to said first protocol is delivered at a transmission rate equal to or lower than said rate calculated by said overhead amount correction unit;
 - 20 a protocol converter for converting data conforming to said first protocol after said scheduling apparatus has shaped the transmission rate therefor to data conforming to said second protocol for use in said second network; and
 - 25 a multiplexer including a current data detector for supplying said scheduling apparatus with said rate information as indicative of a currently set reception rate for said user terminals, said multiplexer being configured

to transmit to each of said user terminals the data conforming to said second protocol from said protocol converter or the data conforming to said first protocol after said scheduling apparatus has shaped the transmission rate therefor.

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2. A network connection system for connecting a first communication network and a plurality of user terminals when a second communication network is interposed between said first communication network and said plurality of user terminals, said second communication network employing a 10 second protocol different from a first protocol employed in said first communication network, said system comprising:

a scheduling apparatus including:

a classification processing unit for classifying data conforming to said first protocol received from said communication network based on quality guaranteed classes set thereto;

15 an overhead amount correction unit for correcting an overhead amount between a data rate associated with said first protocol and a data rate associated with said second protocol to convert received rate information on said second protocol to the rate based on said first protocol;

20 a weighting coefficient calculation unit for calculating a weighting coefficient based on said rate calculated by said overhead amount correction unit such that a minimally guaranteed rate is assured for a minimum rate guaranteed class among 25 classes classified by said classification processing unit;

a weighting scheduler for scheduling data conforming to

5 said first protocol of said minimum rate guaranteed class and of a weighting applied class among said classified classes based on the weighting coefficient calculated by said weighting coefficient calculation unit to deliver the data in accordance with the scheduling; and

10 a scheduler for scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol from said weighting scheduler such that the data conforming to said first protocol is delivered at a transmission rate equal to or lower than said rate calculated by said overhead amount correction unit to deliver the data in accordance with the scheduling;

15 a protocol converter for converting the data conforming to said first protocol after said scheduling apparatus has shaped the transmission rate therefor to data conforming to said second protocol; and

20 a multiplexer including a current data detector for supplying said scheduling apparatus with said rate information as indicative of a currently set reception rate for said user terminals, said multiplexer being configured to transmit to each of said user terminals the data conforming to said second protocol from said protocol converter or the data conforming to said first protocol after said scheduling apparatus has shaped the transmission rate therefor.

3. A network connection system for connecting a first communication network and a plurality of user terminals when a second communication network is interposed between said first communication network and said plurality of user terminals, said second communication network employing a

second protocol different from a first protocol employed in said first communication network, said system comprising:

a scheduling apparatus including:

a classification processing unit for classifying data

5 conforming to said first protocol received from said communication network based on quality guaranteed classes set thereto;

an overhead amount correction unit for correcting an overhead amount between a data rate associated with said first protocol and a data rate associated with said second protocol to convert received rate information on said second protocol to the rate based on said first protocol;

10 15 a weighting coefficient calculation unit for calculating a weighting coefficient based on said rate calculated by said overhead amount correction unit such that a minimally guaranteed rate is assured for the minimum rate guaranteed class among classes classified by said classification processing unit;

a weighting scheduler for scheduling data conforming to said first protocol of said minimum rate guaranteed class and of a weighting applied class among said classified classes based on the weighting coefficient calculated by said weighting coefficient calculation unit to deliver the data in accordance with the scheduling; and

20 25 a preferential control scheduler for scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol from said weighting scheduler, and data conforming to said first protocol of a best-effort class among said classified classes such that the data conforming to

5 said first protocol is delivered at a transmission rate equal to or lower than said rate calculated by said overhead amount correction unit, and for preferentially scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol from said weighting scheduler, and delivering the data conforming to said first protocol of the best-effort class at a timing at which there is no data conforming to said first protocol from said weighting scheduler;

10 a protocol converter for converting the data conforming to said first protocol after said scheduling apparatus has shaped the transmission rate therefor to data conforming to said second protocol; and

15 a multiplexer including a current data detector for supplying said scheduling apparatus with said rate information as indicative of a currently set reception rate for said user terminals, said multiplexer being configured to transmit to each of said user terminals the data conforming to said second protocol from said protocol converter or the data conforming to said first protocol after said scheduling apparatus has shaped the transmission rate therefor.

20 4. A network connection system for connecting a first communication network and a plurality of user terminals when a second communication network is interposed between said first communication network and said plurality of user terminals, said second communication network employing a second protocol different from a first protocol employed in said first communication network, said system comprising:

25 a scheduling apparatus including:

 a classification processing unit for classifying data

conforming to said first protocol received from said communication network based on quality guaranteed classes set thereto;

 a rate measuring unit for measuring a transmission rate for a preferential class among said classified classes;

5 an overhead amount correction unit for correcting an overhead amount between a rate based on said second protocol and a rate based on said first protocol to convert received rate information on said second protocol to the rate based on said first protocol;

10 a weighting coefficient calculation unit for calculating a weighting coefficient based on said rate calculated by said overhead amount correction unit and the transmission rate for the preferential class measured by said rate measuring unit such that a minimally guaranteed rate is assured for the minimum rate guaranteed class among the classes classified by said classification processing unit;

15 a weighting scheduler for scheduling data conforming to said first protocol of said minimum rate guaranteed class and of a weighting applied class among said classified classes based on the weighting coefficient calculated by said weighting coefficient calculation unit to deliver the data in accordance with the scheduling; and

20 a preferential control scheduler for scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class, the data conforming to said first protocol from said weighting scheduler, and data conforming to said first protocol of a best-effort class

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among said classified classes such that the data conforming to said first protocol is delivered at a transmission rate equal to or lower than said rate calculated by said overhead amount correction unit, and for preferentially scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class,

5 preferentially scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol from said weighting scheduler at a timing at which there is no data conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class, and delivering the data conforming to said first protocol of the best-effort class at a timing at which there is no data conforming to said first protocol from said weighting scheduler;

10 a protocol converter for converting the data conforming to said first protocol after said scheduling apparatus has shaped the transmission rate therefor to data conforming to said second protocol; and

15 a multiplexer including a current data detector for supplying said scheduling apparatus with said rate information as indicative of a currently set reception rate for said user terminals, said multiplexer being configured to transmit to each of said user terminals the data conforming to said second protocol from said protocol converter or the data conforming to said first protocol after said scheduling apparatus has shaped the transmission rate therefor.

5. A network connection system for connecting a first communication network and a plurality of user terminals when a second communication network is interposed between said first communication network and said plurality of user terminals, said second communication network employing a

second protocol different from a first protocol employed in said first communication network, said system comprising:

a scheduling apparatus including:

a classification processing unit for classifying data

5 conforming to said first protocol received from said communication network based on quality guaranteed classes set thereto;

a rate measuring unit for measuring a transmission rate for a preferential class among said classified classes;

10 an overhead amount correction unit for correcting an overhead amount between a rate based on said second protocol and a rate based on said first protocol to convert received rate information on said second protocol to the rate based on said first protocol;

15 a preferential class upper limit setting unit, operative when the difference between the transmission rate of the data conforming to said first protocol of the preferential class as measured by said rate measuring unit and said rate calculated by said overhead amount correction unit is lower than a minimally guaranteed rate for a minimum rate guaranteed class among the 20 classes classified by said classification processing unit, for setting an upper limit to the transmission rate for said preferential class for shaping, such that the minimally guaranteed rate can be assured for said minimum rate guaranteed class;

25 a weighting coefficient calculation unit, operative when said preferential class upper limit setting unit does not set the upper limit, for calculating a weighting coefficient based on said

rate calculated by said overhead amount correction unit and the transmission rate for the preferential class measured by said rate measuring unit such that the minimally guaranteed rate is assured for the minimum rate guaranteed class among the classes

5 classified by said classification processing unit, said weighting coefficient calculation unit being further operative when said preferential class upper limit setting unit sets the upper limit, for calculating a weighting coefficient based on said rate calculated by said overhead amount correction unit and the upper limit rate set by said preferential class upper limit setting unit such that the minimally guaranteed rate is assured for said minimum rate

10 guaranteed class;

15 a weighting scheduler for scheduling data conforming to said first protocol of said minimum rate guaranteed class and of a weighting applied class among said classified classes based on the weighting coefficient calculated by said weighting coefficient calculation unit to deliver the data in accordance with the scheduling; and

20 a preferential control scheduler for scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class, the data conforming to said first protocol from said weighting scheduler, and data conforming to said first protocol of a best-effort class among said classified classes, such that the data conforming to said first protocol is delivered at a transmission rate equal to or 25 lower than said rate calculated by said overhead amount correction unit, and for preferentially scheduling the data

conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class,
preferentially scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol
from said weighting scheduler at a timing at which there is no data
conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class, and
5 delivering the data conforming to said first protocol of the best-
effort class at a timing at which there is no data conforming to said
first protocol from said weighting scheduler;
a protocol converter for converting the data conforming to said
first protocol after said scheduling apparatus has shaped the transmission
10 rate therefor to data conforming to said second protocol; and
a multiplexer including a current data detector for supplying said
scheduling apparatus with said rate information as indicative of a currently
set reception rate for said user terminals, said multiplexer being configured
to perform DSL processing using telephone lines to transmit to each of said
15 user terminals the data conforming to said second protocol from said
protocol converter or the data conforming to said first protocol after said
scheduling apparatus has shaped the transmission rate therefor.

6. A network connection system for connecting a first communication
20 network and a plurality of user terminals when a second communication
network is interposed between said first communication network and said
plurality of user terminals, said second communication network employing a
second protocol different from a first protocol employed in said first
communication network, said system comprising:
25 a scheduling apparatus including:
a classification processing unit for classifying data

conforming to said first protocol received from said communication network based on quality guaranteed classes set thereto;

an overhead amount correction unit for correcting an overhead amount between a rate based on said second protocol and a rate based on said first protocol to convert received rate information on said second protocol to the rate based on said first protocol;

a weighting coefficient calculation unit for calculating a weighting coefficient based on said rate calculated by said overhead amount correction unit and the transmission rate for a preferential class among said classified classes using information fed back from said user terminals such that a minimally guaranteed rate is assured for the minimum rate guaranteed class among the classes classified by said classification processing unit;

a weighting scheduler for scheduling data conforming to said first protocol of said minimum rate guaranteed class and of a weighting applied class among said classified classes based on the weighting coefficient calculated by said weighting coefficient calculation unit to deliver the data in accordance with the scheduling; and

a preferential control scheduler for scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class, the data conforming to said first protocol from said weighting scheduler, and data conforming to said first protocol of a best-effort class among said classified classes such that the data conforming to said first protocol is delivered at a transmission rate equal to or

lower than said rate calculated by said overhead amount
correction unit, and for preferentially scheduling the data
conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class,
preferentially scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol
5 from said weighting scheduler at a timing at which there is no data
conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class, and
delivering the data conforming to said first protocol of the best-
effort class at a timing at which there is no data conforming to said
first protocol from said weighting scheduler;

10 a protocol converter for converting the data conforming to said
first protocol after said scheduling apparatus has shaped the transmission
rate therefor to data conforming to said second protocol; and
a multiplexer including a current data detector for supplying said
scheduling apparatus with said rate information as indicative of a currently
15 set reception rate for said user terminals, said multiplexer being configured
to perform DSL processing using telephone lines to transmit to each of said
user terminals the data conforming to said second protocol from said
protocol converter or the data conforming to said first protocol after said
scheduling apparatus has shaped the transmission rate therefor.

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7. A network connection system for connecting a first communication
network and a plurality of user terminals when a second communication
network is interposed between said first communication network and said
plurality of user terminals, said second communication network employing a
25 second protocol different from a first protocol employed in said first
communication network, said system comprising:

a scheduling apparatus including:

 a classification processing unit for classifying data conforming to said first protocol received from said communication network based on quality guaranteed classes set thereto;

5 an overhead amount correction unit for correcting an overhead amount between a rate based on said second protocol and a rate based on said first protocol to convert received rate information on said second protocol to the rate based on said first protocol;

10 a preferential class upper limit setting unit, operative when the difference between the transmission rate for a preferential class among said classified classes determined to be using information fed back from said user terminals and said rate calculated by said overhead amount correction unit is lower than a minimally guaranteed rate for a minimum rate guaranteed class among the classes classified by said classification processing unit, for setting an upper limit to the transmission rate for said preferential class for shaping such that the minimally guaranteed rate can be assured for said minimum rate guaranteed class;

15 a weighting coefficient calculation unit, operative when said preferential class upper limit setting unit does not set the upper limit, for calculating a weighting coefficient based on said rate calculated by said overhead amount correction unit and the transmission rate for the preferential class such that the minimally guaranteed rate is assured for said minimum rate guaranteed class, said weighting coefficient calculation unit being further

operative when said preferential class upper limit setting unit sets the upper limit, for calculating a weighting coefficient based on said rate calculated by said overhead amount correction unit and the upper limit rate set by said preferential class upper limit setting unit such that the minimally guaranteed rate is assured for said 5 minimum rate guaranteed class;

10 a weighting scheduler for scheduling data conforming to said first protocol of said minimum rate guaranteed class and of a weighting applied class among said classified classes based on the weighting coefficient calculated by said weighting coefficient calculation unit to deliver the data in accordance with the scheduling; and

15 a preferential control scheduler for scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class, the data conforming to said first protocol from said weighting scheduler, and data conforming to said first protocol of a best-effort class among said classified classes such that the data conforming to said first protocol is delivered at a transmission rate equal to or lower than said rate calculated by said overhead amount 20 correction unit, and for preferentially scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class, preferentially scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol from said weighting scheduler at a timing at which there is no data conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class, and 25 delivering the data conforming to said first protocol of the best-effort class at a timing at which there is no data conforming to said

first protocol from said weighting scheduler;

a protocol converter for converting the data conforming to said first protocol after said scheduling apparatus has shaped the transmission rate therefor to data conforming to said second protocol; and

5 a multiplexer including a current data detector for supplying said scheduling apparatus with said rate information as indicative of a currently set reception rate for said user terminals, said multiplexer being configured to perform DSL processing using telephone lines to transmit to each of said user terminals the data conforming to said second protocol from said

10 protocol converter or the data conforming to said first protocol after said scheduling apparatus has shaped the transmission rate therefor.

8. The network connection system according to claim 1, wherein said current rate detector periodically applies the rate information to said 15 scheduling apparatus at regular time intervals.

9. The network connection system according to claim 1, wherein said current rate detector applies the rate information to said scheduling apparatus when the set rate based on said second protocol is updated.

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10. The network connection system according to claim 1, wherein said current rate detector supplies said scheduling apparatus with said rate information as indicative of a transmission rate set between a user terminal and said multiplexer in the event of hand-shaking.

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11. The network connection system according to claim 1, wherein said

first communication network is an IP network, said data conforming to said first protocol is an IP packet, said second network is an ATM network, and said data conforming to said second protocol is an ATM cell.

5 12. A traffic shaping method, in a network connection system for connecting a communication network and a plurality of user terminals, for shaping a transmission rate for data conforming to a first protocol from said communication network, said method comprising the steps of:

10 classifying data conforming to said first protocol received from said communication network based on quality guaranteed classes set thereto;

15 correcting an overhead amount between a rate based on a second protocol and a rate based on said first protocol to convert received rate information on said second protocol to the rate based on said first protocol;

20 calculating a weighting coefficient such that a minimally guaranteed rate is assured for a minimum rate guaranteed class among said classified classes based on said calculated rate;

25 scheduling data conforming to said first protocol of said minimum rate guaranteed class and of a weighting applied class among said classified classes based on the calculated weighting coefficient to deliver the data in accordance with the scheduling; and

30 scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol after said weighting, and data conforming to said first protocol of a best-effort class among said classified classes, such that the data conforming to said first protocol is delivered at a transmission rate equal to or lower than said

calculated rate, and for preferentially scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol after said weighting, so that the data conforming to said first protocol of said best effort class is delivered at a timing at which there is no data conforming to said first protocol after said weighting.

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13. A traffic shaping method, in a network connection system for connecting a communication network and a plurality of user terminals, for shaping a transmission rate for data conforming to a first protocol from said communication network, said method comprising the steps of:

10 classifying data conforming to said first protocol received from said communication network based on quality guaranteed classes set thereto;

15 correcting an overhead amount between a rate based on a second protocol and a rate based on said first protocol to convert received rate information on said second protocol to the rate based on said first protocol;

20 calculating a weighting coefficient such that a minimally guaranteed rate is assured for a minimum rate guaranteed class among said classified classes based on said calculated rate;

25 scheduling data conforming to said first protocol of said minimum rate guaranteed class and of a weighting applied class among said classified classes based on the calculated weighting coefficient to deliver the data in accordance with the scheduling; and

25 scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol after said weighting, such that the data conforming to said first protocol is delivered at a transmission rate equal to or lower than said calculated rate, to deliver the

data in accordance with the scheduling.

14. A traffic shaping method, in a network connection system for connecting a communication network and a plurality of user terminals, for 5 shaping a transmission rate for data conforming to a first protocol from said communication network, said method comprising the steps of:

classifying data conforming to said first protocol received from said communication network based on quality guaranteed classes set thereto;

10 measuring a transmission rate for a preferential class among said classified classes;

correcting an overhead amount between a rate based on a second protocol and a rate based on said first protocol to convert received rate information on said second protocol to the rate based on said first 15 protocol;

calculating a weighting coefficient based on said calculated rate and the transmission rate measured for the preferential class such that a minimally guaranteed rate is assured for a minimum rate guaranteed class among the classified classes;

20 scheduling data conforming to said first protocol of said minimum rate guaranteed class and of a weighting applied class among said classified classes based on the calculated weighting coefficient to deliver the data in accordance with the scheduling; and

25 scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class, the data conforming to said first protocol after said weighting, and data conforming to said first protocol of a best-effort class

among said classified classes such that the data conforming to said first protocol is delivered at a transmission rate equal to or lower than said calculated rate, and for preferentially scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class, preferentially scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol after said weighting at a timing at which there is no data conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class, and delivering the data conforming to said first protocol of the best-effort class at a timing at which there is no data conforming to said first protocol after said weighting.

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15. A traffic shaping method, in a network connection system for connecting a communication network and a plurality of user terminals, for shaping a transmission rate for data conforming to a first protocol from said communication network, said method comprising the steps of:

15 classifying data conforming to said first protocol received from said communication network based on quality guaranteed classes set thereto;

 measuring a transmission rate for a preferential class among said classified classes;

20 correcting an overhead amount between a rate based on said second protocol and a rate based on said first protocol to convert received rate information on said second protocol to the rate based on said first protocol;

25 when the difference between said measured transmission rate of the data conforming to said first protocol of the preferential class and said calculated rate is lower than a minimally guaranteed rate for a minimum rate

guaranteed class among said classified classes, setting an upper limit to the transmission rate for said preferential class for shaping such that the minimally guaranteed rate can be assured for said minimum rate guaranteed class;

5 calculating a weighting coefficient based on said calculated rate and said transmission rate measured for the preferential class such that a minimally guaranteed rate is assured for said minimum rate guaranteed class, when the upper limit rate is not set for said preferential class, and calculating a weighting coefficient based on said calculated rate and said set upper limit
10 rate such that the minimally guaranteed rate is assured for said minimum rate guaranteed class when the upper limit rate is set for said preferential class;

15 scheduling data conforming to said first protocol of said minimum rate guaranteed class and of a weighting applied class among said classified classes based on said calculated weighting coefficient to deliver the data in accordance with the scheduling; and

20 scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class, the data conforming to said first protocol after said weighting, and data conforming to said first protocol of a best-effort class among said classified classes such that the data conforming to said first protocol is delivered at a transmission rate equal to or lower than said calculated rate, preferentially scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class, preferentially scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol after said weighting at a timing at which
25 there is no data conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class, and delivering the data conforming to said first protocol of the best-effort

class at a timing at which there is no data conforming to said first protocol after said weighting.

16. A traffic shaping method, in a network connection system for
5 connecting a communication network and a plurality of user terminals, for
shaping a transmission rate for data conforming to a first protocol from said
communication network, said method comprising the steps of:

classifying data conforming to said first protocol received from
said communication network based on quality guaranteed classes set
10 thereto;

correcting an overhead amount between a rate based on a
second protocol and a rate based on said first protocol to convert received
rate information on said second protocol to the rate based on said first
protocol;

15 calculating a weighting coefficient based on said calculated rate
and the transmission rate for a preferential class among said classified
classes determined to be using information fed back from said user terminals
such that a minimally guaranteed rate is assured for a minimum rate
guaranteed class among said classified classes;

20 scheduling data conforming to said first protocol of said minimum
rate guaranteed class and of a weighting applied class among said classified
classes based on said calculated weighting coefficient; and

25 scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol of said
preferential class, the data conforming to said first protocol after said
weighting; and data conforming to said first protocol of a best-effort class
among said classified classes such that the data conforming to said first

protocol is delivered at a transmission rate equal to or lower than said calculated rate, preferentially scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class, preferentially scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol after said weighting at a timing at which

5 there is no data conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class, and delivering the data conforming to said first protocol of the best-effort class at a timing at which there is no data conforming to said first protocol after said weighting.

10 17. A traffic shaping method, in a network connection system for connecting a communication network and a plurality of user terminals, for shaping a transmission rate for data conforming to a first protocol from said communication network, said method comprising the steps of:

15 classifying data conforming to said first protocol received from said communication network based on quality guaranteed classes set thereto;

correcting an overhead amount between a rate based on a second protocol and a rate based on said first protocol to convert received rate information on said second protocol to the rate based on said first

20 protocol;

when the difference between the transmission rate for a preferential class among said classified classes determined using information fed back from said user terminals and said calculated rate is lower than a minimally guaranteed rate for a minimum rate guaranteed class

25 among said classified classes, setting an upper limit to the transmission rate for said preferential class for shaping such that the minimally guaranteed

rate can be assured for said minimum rate guaranteed class;

calculating a weighting coefficient based on said calculated rate

and the transmission rate for the preferential class such that the minimally guaranteed rate is assured for said minimum rate guaranteed class, when

5 the upper limit rate is not set for said preferential class, and calculating a weighting coefficient based on said calculated rate and said upper limit rate set for said preferential class such that the minimally guaranteed rate is assured for said minimum rate guaranteed class, when the upper limit rate is set for said preferential class;

10 scheduling data conforming to said first protocol of said minimum rate guaranteed class and of a weighting applied class among said classified classes based on said calculated weighting coefficient; and

scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class, the data conforming to said first protocol after said

15 weighting, and data conforming to said first protocol of a best-effort class among said classified classes such that the data conforming to said first protocol is transmitted at a transmission rate equal to or lower than said calculated rate, preferentially scheduling the data conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class, preferentially scheduling the data

20 conforming to said first protocol after said weighting at a timing at which there is no data conforming to said first protocol of said preferential class; and delivering the data conforming to said first protocol of the best-effort class at a timing at which there is no data conforming to said first protocol after said weighting.

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18. The traffic shaping method according to claim 12, wherein said

first communication network is an IP network, said data conforming to said first protocol is an IP packet, said second network is an ATM network, and said data conforming to said second protocol is an ATM cell.